

sons, who rail against quack-medicines, and are well aware that such remedies are entitled to no confidence, use them, nevertheless, in secret. But the pseudo-doctors who compound them are too wise to be guided by such an example, as the following anecdote will show.

A brace of London advertising quacks, brothers we believe, sold, wholesale and retail, a halsam with a singular name, and claiming as many virtues as the far-famed halm of Gilead compounded by Dr. Solomon and his successors. One of these self-styled doctors, who belong to the scattered remnant of the unconverted tribes of Israel, being in had health, applied to a regular practitioner for advice. "Why don't you take your own halsam?" asked the Christian, for such was the medical man "called in." "Because," the candid patient replied, "it will do me no good. Our balsam is made for sale. They who have faith in its virtues will purchase it; and the benefit they derive will be proportionate to such faith. As I have none, the halsam will not relieve me, and I have therefore recourse to your professional skill."

Why quackery should have grown to such a goodly tree in England, is matter of interesting inquiry and research. Are we more credulous than our neighbours, or is quackery a plant of indigenous growth in our soil?

In ages long gone by, when the house-leech was barber, surgeon, apothecary, and physician, and high-horn dames were cunning in the healing art—when ignorance and superstition paraded arm-in-arm, as the joint guides of civilised man,—medical science consisted as much in charms and ceremonies as in the use, or, according to the technical term employed at present, in the *exhibition* of medicines and the application of medicaments.* This was the case throughout Europe; it is still so in many parts of England, among the ignorant rustics, in spite of the village apothecary, and is one of the consequences of the absence of education and useful knowledge.

In ages more recently past, even since the discovery of the circulation of the blood, the practice of medicine has scarcely been more rational. The Greek physicians of antiquity were to many the sole oracles of modern practice. The pretended science of alchemy was likewise connected with that of medicine, and the latter frequently wrapped up in as much mystery as the former. As the fermentation of human intellect forced men's minds to work, many vain theories were invented, and many books written by physicians whose names have descended to the generations which have followed them, because their theories, though far from perfect and in many instances founded on error, have nevertheless served as pioneers to clear a road for the discovery of the truth. During the period to which we refer, embracing the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and the beginning of the nineteenth, the practice of medicine was a pursuit of systems, rather than an application of the discovered principles of pathology to idiosyncratic cases. The consequence was frequent failure. Many a life, during this period, has been taken by the doctor, and not by the disease; many a bereavement has followed the physician's attendance, which would not have occurred had nature been left to her own resources and exertions. Is it a subject for gaping wonder, then, that quacks should have sprung up and undertaken to repair the blunders of the regular practitioners; or that many of these latter should themselves have become quacks; or that nostrums for particular diseases, and pretended universal specifics, should have been the consequence, and have been eagerly purchased by sufferers who had tried the physician's golden knowledge, and found it nothing but base metal?

Such indeed was the state of medical science throughout Europe; and the ludicrous pictures of the professors of the healing art drawn by Le Sage and other satirical writers are scarcely caricatures. But when, at length, chemical science arose in its infant purity, and shook off the tinsel trappings with which its half-insane mother, Alchemy, had hedged it, the nostrums and secret universal specifics of quackery were submitted to the test of experiment and found wanting: 1st, because they possessed no chemical properties to produce the effects ascribed to them; 2dly, because, since diseases of different natures often proceed from opposite causes, the remedy which would cure the one would aggravate the other. We will practically illustrate this latter point; the other requires no illustration.

Dr. Broussais states irritation to be the cause of all general and organic disease, however produced. He further alleges that there are two kinds of irritation, the sanguineous and the nervous.

The former originates from an excess of the principle of life, in which the germ of disease engenders inflammation. All inflammatory diseases, therefore, are effects of sanguineous irritation and must be combated by depletion. Nervous irritation, on the other hand, owes its origin to a deficiency in the principle of life; and the fever or irritation arising from any of the diseases belonging to its class, requires strengthening and stimulating medicines. Now sanguineous irritation may be immediately succeeded by nervous or this latter by sanguineous, in the same patient; and the symptoms of both kinds of irritation bear sometimes so strong a resemblance to each other, that to distinguish them is a very nice test of pathological knowledge. Yet the necessity of not mistaking the one for the other is so great that, if depletion were applied to nervous irritation or stimulants to sanguineous irritation, loss of life would be the consequence.

Medical men are fond of trite sayings and maxims, as well as systems; they delight to dazzle the understanding of uncultivated minds. The adage which for ages past has been the "opposite" of medical practice, is *contraria contrariis curantur*, but Dr. Hahnemann has lately started forth with a fresh adage upon which he founds one of the most absurd systems which ever entered the feeble imagination of man to conceive—that homœopathy. This new maxim is the exact opposite of the former: it is *similia similibus curantur*.† As men dearly love paradox, especially when it floats upon novelty, Dr. Hahnemann saying has spread, dragging along with his system. A race homœopathic practitioners have rapidly sprung up, because requires but comparatively little previous study and training for the exhibition(?) of Dr. Hahnemann's infinitesimal doses of medicinal pathology being the loadstar of his system, and as much clouded from the sight of his followers as it is from the sight of very many practitioners who pursue the old system. Anatomy, physiology and chemistry, cannot be necessary to the homœopathist, because when he has ascertained the disease of the patient, he has only turn to the good Dr. Hahnemann's tables, ascertain what drug will communicate the same disease, and give his drug to his patient, the minute doses peculiar to the system he follows. The result will, or will not, be a "similar cured by a similar," that is to say a disease cured by the agent that would produce it in a healthy person. According to this system, the best cure for the bite of a viper would be to let the reptile bite you again; the best remedy for hydrophobia from the bite of a mad dog, that of being again bitten by a rabid animal.

True medical science despises all sayings and maxims such as we have mentioned. It cures disease by first ascertaining its cause, which requires joint pathological, anatomical, and physiological knowledge, and then removing that cause by an application of such knowledge under the guidance of chemical science. There are many further requisites for a good physician, who should possess a general knowledge of the philosophy of matter. Trite sayings and maxims quoted in a dead language constitute, however, a part of that professional quackery which clothes ignorance in the garb of learning to impose upon the uninstructed. This description of quackery exists more especially among the practitioners of thirty or forty years' standing, but is rejected by those who have constantly elevated their practice to a level with the successive discoveries that have been made since they began to exercise their profession. Comparatively few of our medical men have done this, but among that few we have some of the most distinguished names in Europe.

Though, in most countries on the Continent, the light of chemistry has dissipated the illusions attached to the action of a great variety of pharmaceutical preparations, and the most simple medicines are used to combat disease concurrently with the other means indicated by science, the art of healing is still associated in England, with the fancied necessity of swallowing nauseous drugs in great quantities.‡ In country places, besides the various nostrums compounded from simples, often assisted by a charm, and the preparation kept secret by those who have received them as a secret.

* Contraries are cured by contraries.

† Similars are cured by similars.

‡ It will scarcely be credited that, in a work on pharmaceuticals, published in 1821, the following remedies are to be found. We have selected them from a great number of the same description.

HUMAN SKULL. *Cranium hominis*. The powder, in doses of a drachm used in epilepsy: those which have been long buried are to be preferred.

HUMAN BLOOD. *Sanguis hominis*. Anti-epileptic, dried, half a drachm water every morning.

PUPPIES. *Catellii*. Live puppies split and applied while warm, have been employed as poultices to draw out venom from sores or boils.

* The word "medicine" [Fr. *médicine*] signifies a remedy taken into the stomach; the word "medicament" expresses a topical application.

even from their parents, the ignorant poor fancy they can never be freed from disease until they have taken "lots of doctor's stuff," as they term it. This notion is naturally encouraged by the village apothecary, practising under the act of parliament, who dispenses his own prescriptions, and therefore does not spare his drugs, which prove to him an abundant source of profit.

There is another reason why the practice is still pursued of giving patients an unnecessary quantity of nauseous, and frequently of poisonous drugs, not only by the apothecary-physician, but by graduated medical practitioners as well. The former has a natural desire to sell his drugs at an enormous profit, and has a legal sanction to do so. It is notorious that many of the latter receive a percentage upon the profits of the druggists whom they recommend; and that not a few are in actual commercial partnership with a druggist, to whom they always insist upon their prescriptions being sent. Such things are disgraceful to a learned and liberal profession, and ought to be punished either by suspension or total revocation of diploma. These partnerships are very frequent at fashionable watering-places.

THE DIVER.

FROM THE GERMAN OF SCHILLER.*

"Who'll venture it among ye all, my knights and pages brave,
A plunge into the darksome depths of yonder boiling wave!
A golden goblet, rich with gems, I cast into the deep,
He who will dive and bring it thence, the shining bowl may keep."

Thus speaks the king, and from the cliff, that flings its rugged
pride,

In sullen majesty above Charybdis' howling tide,

A glittering cup of burnished gold he hurled into the sea,

"Who is there, then, I ask again, will fetch that bowl for me?"

The knights and pages hear his words, yet answer none is given;
They gaze upon the raging sea, then on the smiling heaven,
And no one cares, for golden bowl, to tempt that yawning grave,—
A third time speaks the king: "How now! will none the venture
brave?"

But all were silent; when a page, of free and gentle blood,
And gallant mien, stepped forth from where his tim'rous comrades
stood,

Undid his silken sash, and cast his brodered cloak away,
Ladies and lords, in wonder great, the noble youth survey.

And as he neared the rocky verge, and gazed upon the main,
Each wave she drank Charybdis gave, loud-hellowing, back again;
And still with sound like booming peal, from distant thunder given,
Forth, forth, from out the black abyss, the rushing stream is driven.

It bubbles up, it gurgles forth, it hisses and it roars,
As when on raging fire a stream of gushing water pours;
Wild sheets of foam shoot up to heaven, waves dash into the air,
As if old Ocean's pregnant womb another sea would bear!

At length the stormy Power is laid, and through the foamy rack,
Down, down, as if to hell, there yawned a gaping gulf of black;
And ever as the boiling waves that whirling vortex near,
Sucked far adown its darkling depths, their waters disappear.

Now quick, or e'er the swell roll back, the page looks to the sky,
Breathes forth a hasty prayer, and then—that wild and warning
cry!

The greedy surge has swept him down, far, far from mortal ken,
And over him mysteriously the waters close again.

And now above the water-gulf the waves are calm once more,
From Ocean's sullen depths alone upsounds the hollow roar,
"Now, fare thee well, high-hearted youth," thus lords and ladies
cried,
While still, with deep and deeper moan, howled dark Charybdis'
tide.

"Cast in thy kingly crown, and say, 'whoever brings it me
Shall wear it too, and in my stead shall Lord and Sovereign be.'
The costly prize seek him who lists; for who may live to say
What hidden things that prison-deep shrouds from the light of day?

From the United States Magazine.

There many a gallant argosie has sunk, to rise no more,
A shattered keel, a shivered mast, are all the waves restore."
And still with ceaseless tempest-roar, like voice of winter blast,
Loud and more loud that ocean-strife its deafening din upcast.

It bubbles up, it gurgles forth, it hisses and it roars
As when on raging fire a stream of gushing water pours;
Wild sheets of foam shoot through the air, waves thunder toward
heaven,
As forth from out the black abyss the billowy tide is driven.

And see, upon the flood's dark breast a streak of silver gleam!
A snow-white neck! a nervous arm divides the rushing stream:
'Tis he! and lo! with gesture glad, aloft in his left hand
He bears the dear-won bowl, and gains at last the long'd-for land.

Long, long and deep, the swimmer breathed; then hailed the
glorious light;

Exultingly they welcomed him, both lord and lady bright.

"He lives! from out the whirlpool's depths, from out a wat'ry
grave,

Right gallantly has he prevailed his soul alive to save."

He comes! the joyous crowd gives way. He sinks unto his knee,
And to the king presents the cup. The king—well pleased is he—
Signs to his daughter fair, and she steps forth with gentle smile,
And fills the cup with sparkling wine; and blushes still, the while.

"Oh king! let him rejoice who breathes in rosy light above,"
(Thus speaks the youth :) "In yonder gulf what living horrors
move!

Let no man tempt the gracious Gods, and dare the impious sight;
In mercy they have covered it beneath eternal night!

"Down was I dragged with lightning speed; and from some deep
sea cave,

Drove forth against me, as I sank, the whirl-stream's raging wave;
It seized me with resistless force, it dashed me round and round;
In giddy circles sweeping on, far through that vast profound.

"I cried to God, at utmost need, to rescue me from death,
Aud lo! a sharp rock's salient point, projecting from beneath;
I grasped it; there the goblet hung, on pointed coral cast,
Else had it fallen into the depths of that unfathomed waste.

"For still the purple darkness lay, beneath me, mountain deep;
And there, although to human ear all sounds for ever sleep,
The eye revolts at monstrous forms, and shudders to behold
Newts, dragons, snakes, and loathsome things, to shapeless masses
rolled.

"It seems, that hideous ocean-hell, with black and frightful
swarms,

There giant polypi stretch forth their thousand slimy arms;
There looms th' unwieldy cuttle-fish, there haunts the stinging
ray,

And grinds his teeth th' insatiate shark—hyena of the sea.

"And there I hung; and on my heart with conscious horror
smote

The dreadful thought, that there, alone, from human aid remote,
In the vast ocean-solitude I clung, in helpless dole,
Amid that noisome cavern-spawn, the only conscious soul.

"And while I shuddered at the thought, crept some huge creature
on,

It moved a hundred joints at once—it snapped at me—'twas done!
Blinded with fear, I loosed my hold, and then the whirlpool's
might

Seized me, but haply swept me up, to safety and to light."

Marvelled the king, and soothly said—"The goblet is thine own;
This costly ring, too, shall be thine, enriched with precious stone,
If once more thou wilt venture down, and bring me word again,
Within Charybdis' deepest cave what wonders may be seen."

With softened heart the daughter heard, and spoke, in fluttering
tone—

"Father, forbear this cruel sport! Bethink thee, he has done
What no one dared; and if thy heart's wild wish thou canst not
tame,

Let some among your knights step forth, and put the page to
shame."

The king has snatched the goblet, and has dashed it in the sea,—
 "Fetch me that bowl once more," he cried, "and thou shalt be
 to me

The first among my belted knights—ay, more! as wedded wife,
 This very night, shalt her embrace, who pleads to save thy life!"

It kindles in his inmost soul, it lightens from his eye;
 He sees her blush, that lovely one; he hears her wistful sigh;
 He marks her cheek fade deadly pale; she sinks! The youth is
 gone!

In death or life, that costly prize must soon be lost or won.

They hear the thund'ring ocean-surge, they note its backward
 sweep;

And fair young eyes, bedimmed with tears, look out o'er that lorn
 deep:

They come, they come, the lone sea-waves, they swell and they
 subside,

But no sea-wave brings back the youth, to claim his ling'ring
 bride!

FAITH IN ASTRONOMY.

WE believe everything that the astronomers agree to tell us. We could not run a mile in a minute, to win a wager of a thousand guineas; but we believe that this huge globe on which we dwell is trundling along at the rate of nineteen miles in a second. Forty miles an hour is to us a startling velocity; but we believe that light travels at the rate of 192,000 miles in the time occupied by a single snap of our fingers. We have a natural propensity to think that, when a boy throws a ball, it falls again of its own accord; but we believe that, but for the mysterious power of gravitation, it would travel on through space to all eternity. We can, at times, distinguish with difficulty the person of a friend, separated from us by the narrow interval of a street; but we believe that astronomers can sweep at pleasure over our "Milky Way," resolve it into combinations of million suns, with ten thousand times ten thousand worlds, and we furthermore believe that, on the very extremity of penetrable space, they can discern a double of our "Milky Way," an infinite duplicate of the infinite—space that is to us eternal, met, on its confines, by eternal space. We love repose, and hate to be disturbed; but we believe that not only the earth, and moon, and planets trundle, but that the solar system is trundling—yea, that the stars which we call fixed are not fixed at all, but that the whole host of heaven is on the move, and that a star which is distant from us four hundred and twelve thousand times the distance of the sun, that is, 412,000 times 95,000,000 of miles, has been ascertained to be flying through illimitable space at the annual rate of *ninety-five millions of millions of miles*. We have always thought ourselves something more than nobody, and not much below the average height of the human race, but we believe—and this is the hardest belief of all—that our size, in proportion to the comparative speck of a globe on which we live, is as if we were an animalcule so small, that between three and four millions might be drawn up, rank and file, in the space of an inch.

Therefore, believing as we do, it was with some spurning feeling of contempt that we read the other day an intimation from a gentleman, informing the public that he was prepared to lecture on astronomy, on the principle of the *earth being at rest*; and offering his services to mechanics' institutions and scientific associations. What! said we, does this feeble body think that he can pull an "enlightened" public back two centuries and a half?—a dwarf holding up his finger to wrestle with the giants who have scaled the heavens! So we set him down as an English edition of a droll Irish fisherman, commemorated by Mr. Lover, in one of his humorous stories. This honest man was somewhat bemazed by the information that the world was round, yet were not his reasoning faculties overwhelmed. "Round, is it?" said he; "it is hard enough to go down hill by land, but it must be the 'dickens' to go down hill by water!" He came to the conclusion that any man who attempted it must "go sliddberin away entirely."

But we could not get over the offer of the worthy gentleman to prove that the earth is at rest. It disturbed our faith. We looked up, and the heavens seemed the same as when David saw of the sun going forth like a bridegroom out of his chamber, and rejoicing as a strong man to run a race. England is still where it was when Julius Cæsar landed on her shores—the Thames still runs,

"Though deep, yet clear; though gentle, yet not dull;
 Strong, without rago; without o'erflowing, full."

When we were an urchin, the Great Bear and the polar star shone brightly over our head, and we have watched with keen interest the apparent motion of the constellation;—now that we have reached the age of manhood, and at a distance of son hundred miles from the scenes of childhood, there they are still sparkling brightly over head, though we have already lost the enthusiasm of youth, and have become cold, dull, sluggish, selfish and stupid, even in middle age. As we mused, scepticism became stronger; we felt inclined to deny that the earth moved at all, and shouted aloud, "Since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation!"

Now came there a deep-thinking and honest-minded man still more to stagger our faith. William Godwin, the author of "Caleb Williams," "Political Justice," &c., thus writes, in work called "Thoughts on Man," published in 1831:—"It can scarcely be imputed to me as profane, if I venture to put down few sceptical doubts on the science of astronomy. All branches of knowledge are to be considered as fair subjects of inquiry; and he that has never doubted may be said, in the highest and strictest sense of the word, never to have believed. . . . It gives us a mighty and sublime idea of the nature of man, to think with what composure and confidence a succession of persons of the greatest genius have launched themselves in illimitable space; with what invincible industry they have proceeded, wasting the midnight oil, racking their faculties, and almost wearing their organs to dust, in measuring the distance of Sirius and other fixed stars, the velocity of light, and 'the myriads of intelligent beings, formed for endless progression in perfection and felicity,' that people the numberless worlds of which they discourse. The illustrious names of Copernicus, Galileo, Gassendi, Kepler, Halley, and Newton, impress us with awe; and if the astronomy they have opened before us is a romance, it is at least a romance more seriously and perseveringly handled than any other in the annals of literature. A vulgar and a plain man would unavoidably as the astronomers, 'How came you so familiarly acquainted with the magnitude and qualities of the heavenly bodies, a great portion of which, by your own account, are millions of millions of miles removed from us?' But, I believe, it is not the fashion of the present day to start so rude a question. I have just turned over an article on astronomy, consisting of one hundred and thirty-three very closely printed quarto pages, and in no corner of the article is any evidence so much as hinted at. Is it not enough *Newton and his compeers have said it!*"

Is it simply because "Newton and his compeers have said it," that we believe in the wonders of astronomy? Surely we have something more to rest upon than that! A voice said, "Step down stairs—examine your foundations." We believe—wherefore do we believe? Sneer not at a man who questions established truths. He may question, because of incapacity to comprehend. He may cavil, because conceit urges him to cavil. He may doubt, and, in doubting, be driven beyond his depth in the waters of doubt. But wherefore do *you* believe? Great is the truth, and it will prevail, now or hereafter—it can afford to smile, but not to sneer—wherefore do you believe? To us a point is a point, if it be a point. A straight line is a straight line, if it be a straight line. A triangle or a circle is a triangle or a circle, if it be a triangle or a circle. We know nothing of mathematics; for, though we crossed the *pons asinorum*, the asses' bridge, we stuck fast on the other side. Wherefore do you believe? We believe—but hold, let us call a lawyer to our assistance, one of